

# Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy Principal's Newsletter

February 2021

Lori O'Mara, Principal

Hello RKA Families-

I am so pleased how we have worked together and succeeded in the first half of the year, especially given the challenges we have all faced. I know that distance learning isn't easy for anyone, and I recognize how hard everyone is working. We are here for you and your children academically, socially and emotionally.

There is much talk surrounding the **possibility of school buildings reopening in the near future** for students in grades 6 through 8. We will most certainly keep families updated as we receive information. In the meantime, it is vitally important to submit the **COVID testing release** for your child. Children without this form on file will not be able to learn in the building. And, **have you set up your NYC Schools (My Student) account yet?** It is one-stop shopping for access to all your child's grades, transcripts, attendance, state test scores, and more. Even though you can see much of this through Pupil Path, it is important to set up access to this account, which comes directly from the Department of Education system. Contact [JPrince4@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:JPrince4@schools.nyc.gov) for both your NYCSA and COVID consent.

**We are doing great with daily student attendance, and our next step is to improve the class PERIOD attendance.** We have begun incentives with the students, and parents will now be receiving notice if their child has missed ANY classes during the day. Please remember that student attendance is the single biggest indicator of student success.

**Report cards are viewable on Pupil Path now.** Most students did very well, but some students may show a mark of NX for 1 or more courses. For high school students this means "incomplete" and that the student did not earn credit for the course. All high school students need to earn specific credits for graduation. All NX courses will need to be made up before June 2021.

**We will be sending out National Honor Society (NHS) invitations this week.** All of the details are posted on our website. In order to be inducted into the NHS students will also need to earn Community Points. Community Points can be earned in a wide variety of ways, but the most fun ways include getting involved in school activities and clubs. There are a variety of clubs and activities to appeal to any child's interests and we are adding more and more each week. We have also included several contests to highlight our spectacular students. Check out the Black History email I sent last Friday for this month's essay contest.

Thank you for your partnership and support as we continue to work through this challenging year.

Sincerely,

*Lori O'Mara*

Lori O'Mara, Principal



# Grade 6 Family Newsletter

## February 2021

### ELA

We have been learning about the world's wonders! Through research and reading informational texts, we have been working on argumentative writing skills. Looking ahead, we will continue to develop these skills by reading and writing about important leaders in the Civil Rights movement.



### Social Studies

We are very excited about having new places to explore in the ancient world of Social Studies! We have completed our study of Egypt. We are now studying ancient China. We will be exploring the impact of geography on the development of early civilization in China, and the emergence of the first dynasties. This will include the Qin Dynasty and its brutal emperor, Shi Huangdi, and will culminate in a study of classical China and the Han Dynasty, a golden age when the roots of much of modern China were formed. Our study of China will be followed by a study of ancient Greece and Rome. There will be continued emphasis on critical reading and writing skills, the analysis of primary and secondary sources, as well as another major project.

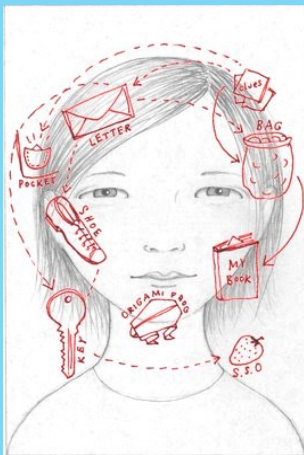


### Mathematics

As we enter the second half of the school year, we are wrapping up Unit 3, working with rates and percentages. Tables and double-line diagrams are used to help students connect with percentages and equivalent ratios. We are reinforcing the understanding of percentages as rates per 100. The Virtual Word Wall, and Family Resources are available on Google Classroom for extra support. All assignments are listed on Google Classroom and Pupil Path. Daily classwork is done on student.desmos.com. Completing daily attendance on Zoom is crucial. Attendance is being marked on Pupil Path, so you can track your child's attendance.

### Literature

Students are reading *When You Reach Me*, by Rebecca Stead, and have ended the unit by completing an essay. Everyone should continue to read their independent reading books. We have been focusing on the habit of "visualizing." This helps students create a mental image of what they read. Next up, we will read *Walk Two Moons*, by Sharon Creech.



desmos

### Math Through Technology

We are focusing on unit rates and percentages, learning terms like: unit rate, speed, pace, and percentage, and learning to recognize that equivalent ratios have equal unit rates. We are representing percentages with tables, tape diagrams, double number line diagrams, and expressions. We use these terms to reason about situations involving unit price, constant speed, and measurement conversion. All this reinforces the understanding of percentages as "rates per 100." We use the iReady platform to supplement the work, students are doing in their Math classes using Desmos.

### Science

In our unit on oceans, atmosphere, and climate, we are investigating how ocean currents behave and what effect they have on climates, specifically the air temperatures of various locations around the world. As they take on the role of climatologists, students investigate changes in air temperature in Christchurch, New Zealand during El Nino years. This serves at the "anchor phenomenon" that students will study throughout the unit. By analyzing temperature fluctuations caused by wind and surface ocean currents that occur in El Nino years, they will learn about the relationship between atmosphere and ocean and its effects on regional climate/temperature patterns.

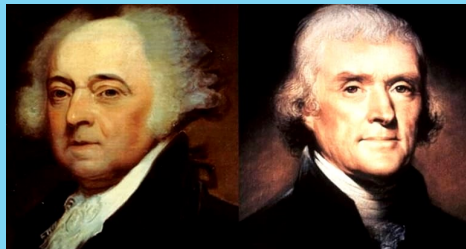


# Grade 7 Family Newsletter

## February 2021

### Social Studies

The next unit in the Passport Curriculum focuses on the *needs* of post-Revolutionary America. It begins with the notion of government and extends to the framing of the United States Constitution. Students will focus on the Constitutional principles of government, including the three branches of government and the Bill of Rights. Chronologically, students will later address the *growth* of America in “Westward Expansion” and a *divided* America as we approach the Civil War. In addition to content, this marking period has seen students be given the opportunity to explore and experience cultural diversity.



### ELA

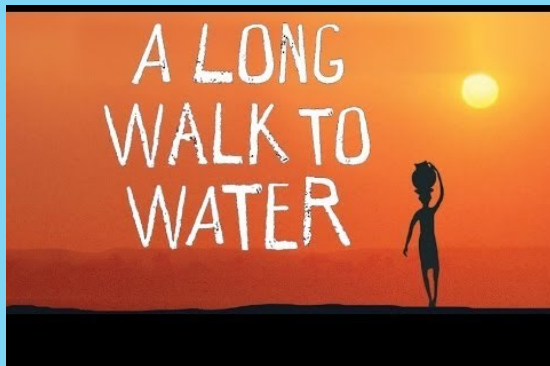
Students have been hard at work on their Unit 2 projects, which are related to various ethical dilemmas present in sports. As we move forward, they will be engaged in a unit from the Code X curriculum, *Democracy*. They will read different literary works which will offer varying perspectives on a democratic society.

As we read the texts, conversations arose regarding the Civil Rights movement, protest songs, the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other “hidden figures” who played an important role in the movement. Please monitor your child’s assignments and progress on Pupil Path. Also encourage them to be present and punctual for their daily Zoom sessions.



### Literature

We have wrapped up our unit on the book, *A Long Walk to Water*, by Linda Sue Park. Students have read, researched, and discussed a variety of topics, including water management, and the refugee crisis. Students have worked on many skills, like supporting their ideas using textual evidence, understanding tone, and comparing the information in a novel, to that in an article. We will soon move on to the next unit, which will revolve around the central text, *Amal Unbound*, by Aisha Saeed.



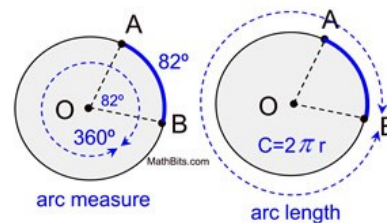
### Science

Taking on the role of chemists working for the “Universal Space Agency,” students will investigate the mystery of a disappearing methane lake on Saturn’s moon, Titan. One team of scientists claims that the lake froze, and it is the students’ assignment to determine what happened. They will investigate phase change at the macro scale and molecular scale by using physical and digital models and hands-on experiences in order to construct explanations about how energy transfer and molecular attraction determine whether a substance will change phase.



### Mathematics

After finishing our work on measuring circles, we are applying what we have learned about proportional relationships to solve problems including fractional quantities and percent change, including problems about real-life situations and issues in society. Students are using tape diagrams, tables, and double number lines to represent these relationships and to determine unknown values. We are also practicing reading and writing equations. We explore proportional relationships using fractional quantities and percentages, before moving on to interpreting and solving problems such as tax, tip, markup, and commission. Lots more exciting work ahead!



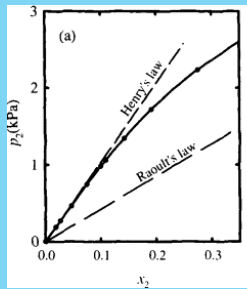
### Math Through Technology

Students will continue work in iReady. Lessons are tailored based on performance in the diagnostic assessment. Students have the opportunity to strengthen their understanding of mathematical concepts, as well as progress through current topics.

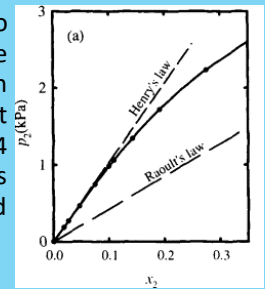
# Grade 8 Family Newsletter

## February 2021

### Algebra



Students are completing a unit of two-variable statistics, where we have learned how to find relationships in data. Soon, we will be turning our attention to a major topic of the Spring Semester: Functions. This broad topic will be covered across several units in which students learn to interpret and analyze linear and non-linear relationships. It is vital that students have access to graphing calculators for the remainder of the school year. The TI-84 Plus graphing calculator that is recommended will be used in high school math classes, as well. Daily work will continue to be completed on [student.desmos.com](https://student.desmos.com). We are excited, and looking forward to a successful Spring!



### Living Environment

Students are exploring how body systems interact to effectively monitor and respond to both internal and external environmental changes. They are using their findings to determine what could cause a marathon runner to collapse after a race! Moving forward, we will study disease and the immune system. The incidence of disease, at different points in history and in different communities, is affected by lifestyle, access to healthy infrastructure, emerging pathogens, and new treatments. Students will explore both the disappearance of certain diseases thanks to antibiotics and vaccines (strep and polio, for example), and the emergence or growth of other diseases (such as asthma and diabetes). We will review cellular processes, like cell division. Accessing data from maps, graphs, and other non-print texts, and using that data to draw conclusions and to ask further questions, is a key component.



### Spanish

We are focusing on authentic culture and real-life communication using Spanish in Puerto Rico—Unidad 3, of the Level 1 *Avance-mos* text. We will practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students will employ critical thinking skills as they complete the activities, comparing the language and culture of Puerto Rico with that of their own community. They will also connect to other academic subjects, using their knowledge of Spanish to access new information. Students are also learning to discuss foods and beverages, dates, months, family members, numbers from 200-1,000,000, and question words. In grammar, we are learning the verb *tener* (to have), *hacer* (to make or to do), forming questions with interrogative words, and the present tense of *-er* and *-ir* verbs. Please encourage your child to practice the activities in their online text, <https://my.hrw.com>.

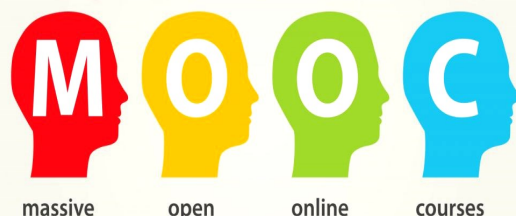


### ELA

We have been exploring the college admissions process, and also alternatives to brick-and-mortar universities, such as online courses—also known as MOOCs. As we read various college essays that explore the stories and experiences of incoming college students, paired with the New York Times article, *The Year of the MOOC*, students are participating in daily discussions about each text—to not only investigate the types of MOOCs offered, but also the characteristics and personality traits that are revealed through each student's

college essay. To assess students' understanding, we ask them to answer the following prompt with an argumentative essay: "Out of three college essays, which student do you think would be best for a MOOC course?" We will be breaking down the essay

process so that students will learn how to construct an effective argumentative essay.



### Social Studies



We started January by finishing our unit on Imperialism, and beginning a unit on World War I. We have discussed the causes of war, the new technology and war tactics, America's involvement, and the Treaty of Versailles. As we move into the second half of the year, we will focus on the 1920s. After that,

we will move to the Great Depression, discussing the social, economic, and political issues of the era. In addition to curriculum work, students will be working on a Black History Month project. We will continue to work on writing skills through it all.



# High School ELA Family Newsletter

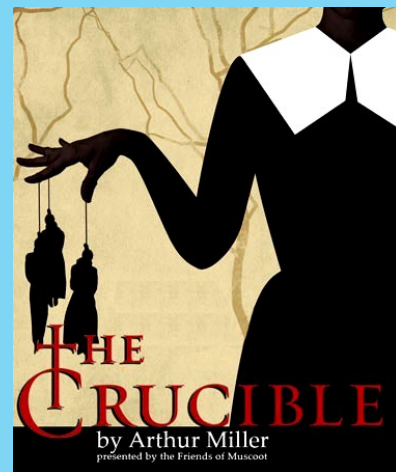
## Grade 9

Ninth grade is heating up with its unit on Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451!* Through symbolic analysis, we are discovering the multitude of parallels between Bradbury's dystopian warning, and today's society. This classic novel is also serving as an anchor text to develop and practice argumentative writing skills.



## AP Language and Composition

Along with the eleventh grade, we have been staging readings of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and reading *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*—responding by writing two rhetorical analysis essays. Students will also close-read several essays and speeches for the



purpose of practicing rhetorical analysis, highlighted by a study of Queen Elizabeth's Speech at Shrewsbury, and complemented by a visual analysis of a highly symbolic portrait of her.

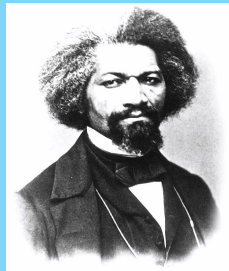
## Grade 10

**BIG BROTHER**  
  
**IS WATCHING YOU**

Students are working diligently to read and respond to the classic novel, *1984*, by George Orwell. For the culminating assignment, students were tasked with writing a fully-developed position paper in which they highlight the recurring themes in the novel—the ones most interesting or relevant to them. They will support their overarching critique with real-world examples.

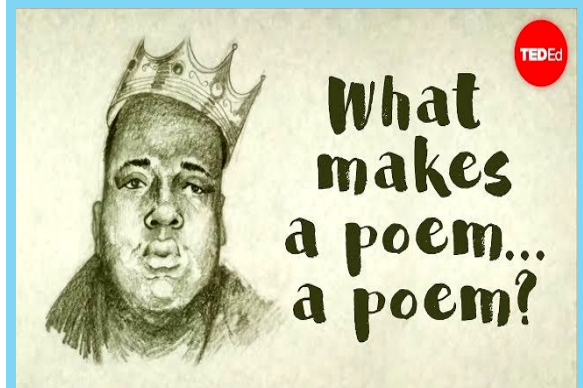
## Grade 11

Classes have been staging readings of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and also viewing filmed and staged versions. Students have begun, or will soon begin, *The Narrative of Frederick Douglass*, written by the escaped slave-turned-abolitionist. From there, we will move into contemporary black literature, reading Angie Thomas' *The Hate U Give*, which was released last year as a major motion picture.



## AP Literature and Composition

We are continuing to add to our fund of poetic elements and devices, and are finishing our unit with a study of various poetic forms. Students have had the opportunity to try their hand at writing, as well as reading, haiku, limericks, concrete poems, and sonnets. We will conclude the poetry unit with a study of the sonnet form, using it as a bridge to Shakespeare, when we will study excerpts of various plays before reading *King Lear* and viewing a production filmed live at The Globe Theatre.



## Grade 12

Seniors have been working on a research paper on a topic of their choosing. They are gathering valuable research, and written at least one draft to receive feedback on. These papers are due at the beginning of Term 2. Next, we will start a poetry unit, focusing on creative expression through poetry.



# High School Social Studies Family Newsletter

## Global Studies 9

We are learning about the major belief systems of the world, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We are also studying Chinese philosophies, including Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism. We are exploring how these beliefs affect people today. Students completed their second “Enduring Issue” essay on belief systems to better prepare for tenth grade and the Global Studies Regents exam. Next up, we will dive into the classical civilizations of China, India, Greece, and Rome.

## U. S. History 11

We concluded the first semester with a study of the Civil War and the Reconstruction period, with students completing a document-based essay on late 19th century race relations. We begin the new marking period with a study of Industrialism and its many effects on U.S. society.



## AP U.S. History

We have wrapped up our study of the late 19th Century, focusing on industrialization and its many effects. Recent major assignments included a free-response essay on the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, and a document-based essay on the rise of big business. We are now in Unit 7, covering the time period of 1890-1945. We are approaching topics in an historically inclusive way, accessing narrative, images, and non-print resources. We are including perspectives of marginalized groups often not included or highlighted in history. Families should follow Ms. Lustig’s directions (posted in Google Classroom) about fee waivers and potential financial assistance for the AP exam.

## Africana Studies

We have been studying the histories, politics, and cultures of people of Africa and African descent. It is our goal to bridge and build cultural understandings. Themes include: finding our roots, exploring resources pertaining to slavery in the Americas, West African kingdoms and civilizations, African folktales and proverbs, the Great Migration, the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil rights Act, and the Black Lives Matter movement. “Freestyle Fridays” were devoted to films and documentaries which enabled us to discuss genres within the themes. There are many more insights to come!

## Global Studies 10

We are studying 19th century Nationalism and Imperialism. We have focused on nationalist movements, the impacts of nationalism, causes of the “New Imperialism” of the 19th century, the process and impact of conquests in Africa and India, and foreign influences on China and Japan. We’ve used a variety of primary and secondary sources, including a contemporary poem and a parody poem (White Man’s Burden), political cartoons, maps, quotations, and more. Assessments will include Regents-aligned questions. Next, we will focus on the Russian Revolution, and World War I.



## Participation in Government

Last semester, we studied topics in Economics, including economic systems, banking, money, stocks, budgets, investments, loans, interest, and taxes. This coming semester, we will be studying government and civic participation. The topics of study will include: types of governments, functions of government, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the three branches of the federal government, state laws versus federal laws, political parties, lobbying, special interest groups, elections, voting, jury duty, legal systems, and civic activism. We will use various techniques of study: research paper writing, debates, group projects, mock trials, discussions, and exams.

## Fundamentals of Law

Students have been immersed in the study of significant Constitutional issues arising from key Supreme Court decisions. We have read the actual cases, and learned how to prepare legal briefs (fact pattern, legal issue and legal reasoning for the Court’s decision) for each case. We have thoroughly discussed Fifth Amendment issues, including “Double Jeopardy/Dual Sovereignty Doctrine” (Heath v. Alabama), and “Eminent Domain” (Nollan v. California). We’ve also studied several Sixth Amendment issues including “The Right to a Speedy Trial” (Barker v. Wingo). Lastly, classes spent two weeks researching and debating the Eighth Amendment right against cruel and unusual punishment, culminating in a position paper on the death penalty.





# High School Science Family Newsletter

## Environmental Science

Students have just completed a major unit on pollution, and will now begin studying solid and hazardous waste. Students will learn about the types of waste generated in the United States (with particular reference to New York) and the challenges related to waste management, disposal, and the health and environmental impacts.



## Weather and Climate

We have wrapped up the fundamentals of weather, and are moving on to study about climate change throughout Earth's history. The current rate of species extinction is as much as 100 times the normal rate, causing most scientists to ask: "Are we in the middle of a sixth mass extinction?" We will analyze and interpret data from mass extinctions in the past to develop an understanding of how climates have shifted and how these past climates are both similar and different to the climate changes we see today. Students will learn that all mass extinctions have been due to atmospheric changes caused by different factors on different time scales—what's different about today is that humans are the culprits.

## Physics

We are completing the final two topics—Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation and Momentum—in the unit on mechanics, and will then move on to a unit on energy. In this unit, students will observe and describe transmission of various forms of energy, and describe and explain the exchange among potential energy, kinetic energy, and internal energy for simple mechanical systems, such as a pendulum, a roller coaster, a spring, and a freely-falling object. As students complete each topic, they will also complete the relevant Pivot Lab activity related to the topic.

## Living Environment

Students are exploring how body systems interact to effectively monitor and respond to both internal and external environmental changes. They are using their findings to determine what could cause a marathon runner to collapse after a race! Moving forward, we will study disease and the immune system. The incidence of disease, at different points in history and in different communities, is affected by lifestyle, access to healthy infrastructure, emerging pathogens, and new treatments. Students will explore both the disappearance of certain diseases thanks to antibiotics and vaccines (strep and polio, for example), and the emergence or growth of other diseases (such as asthma and diabetes). We will review cellular processes, like cell division. Accessing data from maps, graphs, and other non-print texts, and using that data to draw conclusions and to ask further questions, is a key component.

## Earth Science

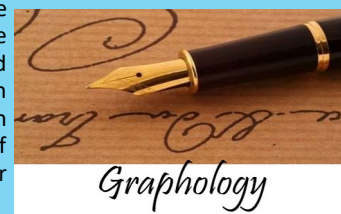
For nearly five billion years, the earth's surface has been constantly built up and broken down by processes taking place above and below its surface, resulting in the wide range of beautiful and complex landscapes we see today. Students will continue to make connections between the earth's systems when they study the interactions between the lithosphere, atmosphere, hydrosphere, and biosphere, by investigating the Rock Cycle, and the erosional processes of wind, wave action, streams, and mass movement.

## Chemistry

Chemistry is important because everything we do is Chemistry! Even our bodies are made of chemicals. Chemical reactions occur when you breathe, eat, or just sit there reading. All matter is made of chemicals, so the importance of Chemistry is that it's the study of everything. In class we are identifying the essential compound structures in our basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, energy, and clean air, water, and soil. We are learning how to distinguish between different chemical materials that make up our daily substances in order to enrich our quality of life in numerous ways.

## Forensics

Forensic Toxicology helps determine the cause-and-effect relationship between exposure to a drug or other substance, and the toxic or lethal effects from that exposure. Exposure to drugs and other toxins may be determined by performing chemical tests to analyze body fluids, stomach contents, sink, hair, or—in the case of lethal exposures—internal organs. We will be learning handwriting analysis, which is a very broad area in the field of forensics, and is the examination and comparison of questioned documents with known material. Experts establish the authenticity of documents, and detect and changes, erasures, or obliterations that may have occurred.



## Psychology

This marking period, we were studying personality through the psychological perspectives. We've had discussions about whether or not personality is changeable. We discussed the biological and learning perspectives at length. We've learned about the theories and experiments of Alport, Kagen, Skinner, Watson, Bandura, Pavlov, and Thorndike. We also delved into the Minnesota twin studies. After mastering these theories, we discussed the nature/nurture argument at length. Moving forward, we will be learning about the socio-cultural perspective, the cognitive perspective, and the humanistic perspective. We will also discuss all the psychologists, theories, and experiments associated with these perspectives.

## AP Biology

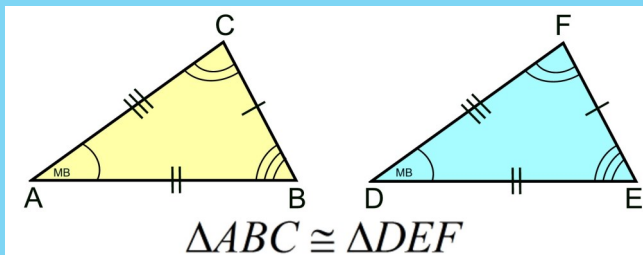
We recently completed our unit on the Chemistry of Life. We reviewed basic Chemistry, explored the properties of water, and learned about the basic building blocks of life. Presently, we are investigating the structure and function of cells and then moving on to cellular energetics.



# High School Mathematics Family Newsletter

## Geometry

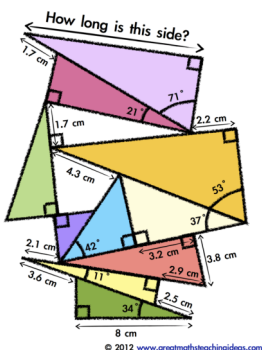
In our current unit, *Congruence*, students use rigid transformations to justify the triangle congruence theorems of Euclidean Geometry: side-side-side theorem, side-angle-side theorem, and angle-side-angle theorem. IN our next unit, Similarity, students will use dilations and rigid transformations to justify triangles are similar. They will prove, that if triangles have three pairs of congruent corresponding angles and three pairs of corresponding sides in a proportional relationship, the triangles are similar. Students will then be able to prove the angle-angel triangle similarity theorem. They will learn to prove theorems using rigid transformations and dilations. Later, they will use similarity shortcuts to justify that triangle must be similar. Since there is more calculation in this unit, students may benefit from access to calculators to deemphasize calculation and focus on reasoning about the context. These units preview many of the important concepts that students rely on to make sense of Trigonometry in later units.



## Algebra 2 & Trigonometry

We have finished an exploration of polynomial functions and the multiple ways in which we can represent them. Through collaborative work, students have built on their knowledge of quadratic functions and extended it to higher-degree polynomials. They now know how to use long division to divide polynomials to determine if one polynomial is a factor of another (and discovered a shortcut called the Remainder Theorem) and learned how to rewrite polynomials in more useful ways, such as factored form. Now, students will apply their skills toward working with rational functions, solving systems of equations, and radical equations. This process will lead to the need for redefining square roots in terms of the imaginary unit  $i$ . Seniors in the 3-year course just completed a unit focusing on transforming base functions to better model collected data, and are now reviewing how to model exponential growth and decay. This review will extend to the study of logarithms.

### Trigonometry Pile Up!



## AP Calculus AB

We have completed eight out of ten units of the course. We recently covered the modeling differential equations, slope fields, and the average values of a function. We have just begun Unit 9, covering separate differential equations, exponential growth and decay, and the net change theorem. We are also working on problems from the AP College Board website to prepare for the AP exam. In the near future, we will be working on a real-life scenario project analyzing exponential growth and decay. Please check Pupil Path for updated grades, upcoming assignments, and attendance.

## Algebra I

Students are working on functions. They have been introduced to linear functions in the eighth grade, but will now begin to represent, interpret, and use function notation for various types of functions. They will develop new tools for describing functions, interpreting their domain and range, average rate of change, and other key terms for analyzing the graphs of functions. Student work continues to be assigned on student.desmos.com, which has been helpful for teachers to give student feedback and for students to complete self-paced assignments. Keep checking



## Precalculus

We have completed the third unit of the course, covering Trigonometry and the unit circle. We are now in Unit 4, covering Trigonometry part II, which includes: verifying trigonometric identities, solving trigonometric equations, and inverse trigonometry. Trigonometry is a significant part of the Calculus curriculum. Please check Pupil Path for updated grades, upcoming assignments, and attendance.





# High School Spanish Family Newsletter



## Spanish 1

We have finished Unit 1, lesson 2, of Level 1 *Avancemos*. We focus on authentic culture and real-life communication using Spanish. We practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking. As we complete the activities, we employ critical thinking skills as we compare Spanish language and culture with that of our own community. Currently, students are learning to describe themselves and others, identify people and things, use *ser* to describe what someone is like, definite and indefinite articles, and noun-adjective agreement.



## Spanish 2

We are midway through Unit 1 of Level 2 *Avancemos*. We focus on authentic culture and real-life communication using Spanish. We practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking. As we complete the activities, we employ critical thinking skills as we compare Spanish language and culture with that of our own community. Currently, students are learning to talk about trip preparations, things you do at an airport, how to ask directions, and to talk about what we have done on our class “virtual trip” to Costa Rica! We will focus on the following grammar points: direct and indirect object pronouns, location prepositions, and the preterite of regular *-ar* verbs, *ir*, *ser*, *hacer*, *ver*, and *dar*.

We are working on Unit 1 of Level 3 *Avancemos*. In order to prepare for our LOTE exam at the end of the year, students will continue to enhance their skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish. Using their prior knowledge, they are expanding their skills by learning more tenses. We have reviewed the present and preterite tenses, and learned vocabulary about camping experiences in Mexico. Soon we will move on to the imperfect, future, and conditional tenses. Students will work on their skills through a variety of projects and dialogue assignments. Using their imagination, they will venture out into exciting adventures in the woods of Mexico or along the beautiful beaches of Latin America. We will also listen to and read authentic resources in Spanish.

## Spanish 3



*Support your child's learning at home by helping them review vocabulary and to use Spanish whenever possible. Try watching some Spanish TV and listening to some Spanish music. Go to a Spanish restaurant and try ordering in Spanish. People won't laugh at you—they will appreciate the effort!*



# High School Physical Education Family Newsletter

## Physical Education



Students completed two short exercise videos a week, called *Wake Up with Joe* on YouTube. Now, students will be asked to complete one, longer video a week. These are called *Body Coach*, and are also on YouTube. These videos focus on cardiovascular endurance, strength, and flexibility, and can be used not only for Phys Ed class, but any time you feel the need for a little exercise!



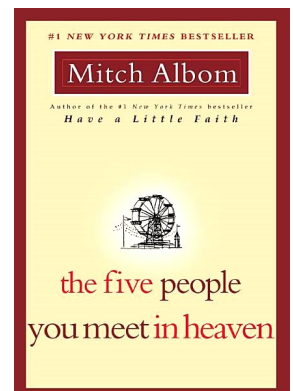
## Health

Nutrition and physical activity—assessing one's eating habits, reading food labels, the importance of eating breakfast every day, and keeping food safe to eat. Now we are working on lessons like what influences food choices, body image, eating disorders, dieting dangers, and staying safe while getting fit. Other topics include injury prevention and useful preventative practices.



## Mindfulness and Wellness

We continue on our quest to become more self-aware. On our agenda: learning ways to take better care of ourselves. Much of this falls under the domain of self-care. Becoming more self-aware leads to understanding and appreciating ourselves more. Everything from understanding the importance of adequate sleep to proper exercise and nutrition is part of our class. Empowering ourselves with lessons on how not to take things personally, countering negative thinking, and connecting with the beauty of simple things like a meaningful quote or poem, are all part of this class. Many of us are reading *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, by Mitch Albom. Students are learning that authors use the traits of writing to communicate ideas effectively. We are addressing how an individual makes an impact on others, regardless of whether they are aware of this impact or not. We will use audio, video, and multimedia tools to create clear and meaningful presentations of ideas.

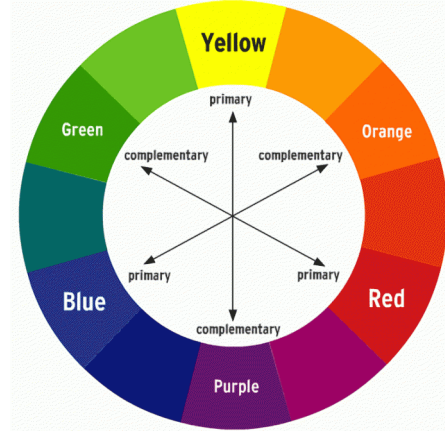




# It's the Arts! ... at RKA

## Ms. Emsworth's Art

Students have been learning the basics of Color Theory (primary, secondary, tertiary, complementary, analogous, and warm and cool colors). They have been creating portraits, landscapes, and still life images. Ask your child to see their sketchbook—there will be some beautiful work in there!



## Mr. Klein's Art

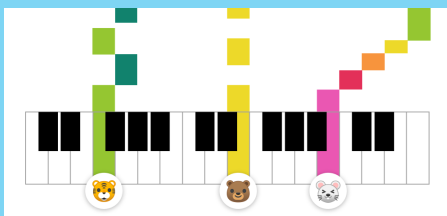
Despite the odds, our young artists are [pushing through! There is some amazing work being produced! Students are studying color theory. They will begin exploring the color wheel and bringing their black and white illustrations to life. While some practice with raw materials, others seek out new methods using the computer software at hand.

## Ms. Kaminski's Art

Since we are a hands-on class, we have the flexibility to adapt to and to accommodate to our current situation, and offer our students new ways to think and express their thoughts. We spent much of the first semester getting to know one another (largely through journal entries the students wrote) and learning about and reviewing the fundamental elements and principles of art. One more tool will be introduced: how to build a sense of depth in 2-D. After this, our hands-on aspect of the class will develop into a series of art problems involving open-ended solutions. We will be making a class recipe book. Students will share their expertise in both food and non-food areas (one student is learning how to make their own pigments!) Journal entries will continue, but will be redesigned and called "Observation Journals." We will interpret, think, and feel!

## Ms. Zalantis' Music

We began the year focusing on meter and on understanding rhythm, then moved on to pitch—learning by playing on Google Chrome's "Shared Piano." Through the link, we can play on the same piano while in our separate homes. As we learned songs from a simple notation that shows rhythm notation and letter names, we became familiar with the musical alphabet—descending and ascending melodic lines and form. We then moved our pitch notation onto the staff, and took gradual steps to 1. Determine if notes are on lines or spaces of the staff, 2. Number the lines and spaces, and 3. Determine the letter names of notes in the treble clef. For context, we followed solo and orchestral scores with a focus



on instruments that read in treble clef. To apply our knowledge, we are reading from the staff to play simple folk songs on the piano that are tritonic, tetratonic, and pentatonic. Any singers out there? Why not join the

Wednesday after school Chorus Club? [HZalantis@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:HZalantis@schools.nyc.gov).

## Ms. Castiner's Music



Students have been learning to count and play rhythms that add up to one beat, including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth note combinations. Understanding these rhythms gives us the skills to read concert band music and play percussion along with recordings to experience what it is like to be part of a band. In the next unit, students will have access to a virtual piano keyboard, where they will learn about pitch, the piano, and the music staff. There is a virtual Band Club on Tuesdays at 2:30 for students who have access to a band instrument (sorry, not guitar). We will get our instruments out and have some fun, and get some help with our skills. Questions?

[LCastiner@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:LCastiner@schools.nyc.gov).